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THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Application of:

Vincent A. Meli et al.

482,862

Serial No.: 08/098,752

Filed: July 28, 1993

For: METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR  
FORMING AND HERMETICALLY  
SEALING SLICES OF FOOD ITEMS

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) Art Unit: 3201  
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) Examiner: L. Johnson  
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REC

MAR 20 1997

GROUP 3200

RULE 115 AMENDMENT

Honorable Commissioner of Patents  
and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Dear Sir:

In response to the non-final Office Action mailed January 9, 1997, Applicants respond as follows.

IN THE ABSTRACT:

*Abstract of the Disclosure.*

An apparatus and method for continuously forming hermetically sealed packages of a food item. A continuous web of thermoplastic material is folded and continuously formed with a hermetic longitudinal seal. The food item is inserted between inner surfaces of the tubular web member, which is then flattened to form a thin slice. A hermetic cross-seal is continuously formed transverse to the longitudinal seal. The web can be cooled before the cross-seals are formed.